

HOLIDAY TALES.



THE TWO DOVES, AND OTHER TALES.

HUDSON, OHIO:
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1855.



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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

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—
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.
—

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—
1853.

THE TWO DOVES.

I WILL now tell you a story about two good little children, Marian and Henry, who lived some time ago in Switzerland.

Marian was seven years old, and her little brother Henry was about five. They were the hope and delight of their Mamma, who loved them with the most tender affection. These good children had always lived together, and so much pleasure did they take in each other's society, that being together

seemed their greatest happiness. Marian could not be happy an instant away from her brother; Henry was never more pleased than when with his sister. Whether walking in the fields, or at play in their little room, at meal times or at study, they always acted together; and this was partly the reason why they agreed so well. You would see Marian's large doll beside Henry's little soldier, and Henry's wooden horse close by the doll's cradle. On the same chair would be lying together the doll's cap and the soldier's hat, a tiny parasol, and a little sword. So we may be quite sure that whatever belonged to one was used to amuse the other, and that the hearts of Marian and Henry

lived in unison. One day a friend of their Mamma sent them a present of a pair of Doves, beautifully white, except that their necks were encircled with a black ring. Henry and Marian could not make enough of these Doves. They were so tame that they would perch on the children's heads, or their shoulders, or their arms; they would peck food from their hands, and sometimes even take it from their mouth. "Ah, you pretty bird," said Marian, "nothing has ever pleased me so much."

"They are always together as we are, they love one another so much," said Henry.

"We will do as they do, Henry, we will always be together."

“Always, dear sister,” and the children embraced each other, while the Doves fluttered upon their shoulders, seeming to feel as happy as the children were.

The birds were taken great care of in their little house, and became more and more beautiful, their feathers were white as snow, and they strutted up and down, seeming to be quite proud of their habitation; they enjoyed their liberty very often, for Marian and Henry would open the door of their little house, and they would come out to be petted by the children, and would seem thankful for the good fortune that had placed them in such good hands. But their love to these birds gave rise to a little jeal-

ousy between Henry and Marian; they would talk about whose turn it was to open the door, and then about the right to feed them, or give them fresh water. Marian would say, laughingly, that they loved her brother more than herself; Henry would contradict that, and say that he was sure they liked his sister better. This little jealous feeling (as is often the case with much older people) turned out to be the cause of much unhappiness to these little ones. They became desirous that each Dove should have a separate house for itself. They made this wish known to their good Mamma, who, without opposing or approving their scheme, had two cages placed in Marian's room, and one day

she went with her brother to decide which bird each should have ; so they agreed that the door should be set open in the usual way, and that the bird which perched first on Marian's head or arm should belong to her, and the other to Henry. This was soon done, and Marian's Dove was shut up in one cage and Henry's Dove in the other. The poor birds soon became sad and still, their beautiful white feathers turned to a dull yellow, they ceased to flap their wings, and their cooing was no more heard. The best of wheat and beans, and the clearest water, were given to them in abundance, but all were of no use ; the Doves could not endure being separate from each other. Each would

sit on the highest perch in its house, and long for the company of the other; or sometimes they would weary themselves with trying to get through the bars, and when quite tired out, each would return to its solitary perch. Henry and Marian were very much afflicted at all this, and told their distress to their dear mother, who, under the pretence that they might give more attention to the birds, proposed that each should have one in a separate room, and remain alone with it. The first day seemed rather long to the children, but those who watched over them, and delighted in seeing them together, were desirous of giving them experience, and so they remained a second day; now this day was to

both more dreary than the first, and on the third day they found it quite unbearable.

“No play,” said Henry; “Oh, this is very wearisome; I would give all my playthings to be a little while with my sister.”

“How can I,” said Marian, “live without my brother? Without him there is no play; I can not be happy away from him. Without him I care for nothing; every thing is tedious; I can not bear it any longer.”

The truth is, they could not be happy away from each other, so they entreated their Mamma to allow them to be together again, as it was impossible for them to live separately.

“So it is,” said their mother, “with your

young Doves. They came from the same nest, they have been nourished and fed together, they are accustomed to live with one another, and they feel it, as you yourselves do, a painful thing to be parted, and will soon die of grief."

At these words both the children started, and ran and released the prisoners. Out flew the doves, rejoicing in their liberty, and caressed each other with their beaks. They seemed by their cooing to thank those who had released them. They soon became as healthy as before, and their feathers also became as white as ever. Marian and Henry resolved never to separate them again, but to attend them as they did at first; and the two cages were taken away.

“My dear children,” said their good mother to them, pressing them to her bosom; “you have now learned that the ties of relationship bind faster than chains; they give the greatest joy to our hearts, they are our greatest happiness; may you long love one another and be happy; forget not, that in the palace or in the humble cottage, in the busy world, or the more retired life, the tongue speaks nothing more pleasing, and the ear hears nothing more sweet, than the endearing names—Brother and Sister; even with the oldest people, it gives joy to remember when they lisped those words.

THE ANT-HOUSES.

ROBERT gave his cousin Richard, for a birth-day present, a nightingale, in a beautiful green cage, and told him to feed it with meal-worms and ants' eggs. The miller or the baker would supply him with the meal-worms, but the ants' eggs he would be pretty sure to find in his father's garden. He would only have to put a flower-pot, or a little wooden tub, in some dry sunny place, and the ants would find their way under the

hedge, and lay their eggs there; for they are always careful to put them where the rain can not come.

Richard bought some meal-worms, but they cost almost all his pocket-money; and he must set about finding the ants' eggs, which would cost him nothing. So he did as Robert had told him, and, to his great delight, he found when he took up the flower-pot, on the next day, that a whole colony of ants had crept under it; for the earth was thrown up into little heaps, and looked fine, as if it had been sifted. Some little ants were trotting about quickly, as if they were trying to find out what had happened to make it so suddenly light.

Richard took a stick, and stirred the earth a little, and found a great many little, long white eggs lying about. He stretched out his hand to put the eggs into a little cup which he had brought with him, when, to his great amazement, the little ants caught up the eggs in their mouths, and ran away with them.

When Richard saw the kind motherly care of the ants, the tears came into his eyes, and he said, "No, I can not be so cruel as to trouble all these little creatures just to make one happy ; and my little nightingale would like much better to sing in the cool green trees than in his close prison of a cage. I will go and let him fly where he pleases."

He did so, and oh ! how soon the night-
ingale darted off to the grove near by, where
his song was heard for many a long sum-
mer's evening after ; and how joyful, too,
Richard's heart felt.





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